

READING, PENNSYLVANIA

POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS ANALYSIS

April 2006



MANAGEMENT PARTNERS
INCORPORATED

April 7, 2006

Mr. Leon Churchill
Managing Director
City of Reading
815 Washington Street, Room 2-27
Reading, PA 19601-3690

Dear Leon:

Management Partners has completed our final operations analysis report of the City of Reading Police Department. The City faces many challenges as you seek to restructure financially, address quality of life needs in the community and promote economic development.

It is our belief that addressing the recommendations contained in this report will create a more effective policing strategy for the community. That, in turn, will increase safety in Reading.

Sincerely,

Gerald E. Newfarmer
President and CEO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Reading faces major financial challenges that it must address to avoid Act 47 (the Pennsylvania statute for municipal bankruptcy) proceedings. Reading's operating expenses continue to increase while its major revenue sources only grow when the City increases the tax rates. To develop a coherent strategy for dealing with this challenge, the City of Reading retained Management Partners through a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Early Intervention Program (EIP).

Central to expanding the City's economic development opportunities is increasing the community's perception of safety. Developing strategies to effectively address crime and improve the efficacy of the City's Police Department will have a positive impact on the quality of life and financial future of the City of Reading. Management Partners was asked to conduct a thorough operational analysis of the Reading Police Department – an operation that accounts for over \$23 million of the \$60 million City general fund budget.

The operational analysis makes recommendations that would reassign 11 sworn personnel from support duties to direct crime prevention/crime fighting duties even while eliminating 12 command-rank positions. In all, the report recommends reducing the number of sworn personnel from 208 to 185 while increasing the number of sworn personnel assigned to crime prevention/crime fighting duties from 167 to 174. The report also recommends hiring 22 additional civilian personnel, increasing the number of civilians from 26 to 48. Most of the additional civilians are replacements for sworn personnel reassigned to street duties.

Most importantly, the report makes recommendations designed to facilitate the implementation of a new operational model – problem-oriented policing. This model of police service has proven to be enormously successful in preventing and reducing crime in jurisdictions where it has been capably implemented.

When fully implemented, the recommendations in the report would save approximately \$863,000 in annual operating cost. If the savings were subsequently applied to hiring additional sworn personnel, Reading would be able to hire an additional 11 police officers at no additional cost.

BACKGROUND

Police service is an essential business of local government. In Reading, Pennsylvania, as is typical in city or county government, police services are among the most critical, the most scrutinized and the most visible activities undertaken by local government. Police departments are worthy of close examination because of their need for resources and the critical nature of the service provided. Local officials have expressed concern about the level and nature of crime in the community, and they seek solutions.

The local economy has seen a downturn that has caused severe financial stress for the City of Reading, Pennsylvania. Because the Police Department commands more than one-third of the City's general fund budget, it has borne a proportional share of the need to economize. In this context, the Mayor and the Managing Director have asked for an operational review to determine efficiencies that will enable better service while lowering costs.

In addition to financial stress, Reading has also experienced an increase in violent crime. Although overall Part I crime changed little between 2004 and 2005 murders increased by 64% over 2004 and rapes increased by 42% during that same time frame.

The Mayor appointed a new police chief just prior to the beginning of field work for this analysis. The new chief took office as this study was being concluded. The appointment of a new chief is another indicator that the Mayor is seeking to introduce changes in the department that will make the most effective use of its resources.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

As shown in Table 1, the Reading Police Department has 234 positions, according to the 2005 budget.

TABLE 1: READING POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING

Title	Number of positions
Chief	1
Deputy Chief	1
Inspector	2
Captain	3
Lieutenant	7
Sergeant	32
Officer / Detective	162
Total sworn	207
Civilians*	26
Total all positions	234

* Does not include 89 part-time school crossing guards.

The 2006 proposed operating budget for the Police Department is \$23,303,496, of which \$15,953,355 is for salaries, \$6,507,695 is for fringe benefits, and \$842,446 is for non-personnel costs.

The major organizational unit budget breakdown is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET BY MAJOR ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT

Unit	2006 Proposed Budget
Administration	\$802,074
Patrol	\$15,697,378
Special Services	\$2,377,019
Criminal Investigation	\$4,427,025
Total	\$23,303,496

In our examination of police departments, Management Partners distinguishes between positions that provide direct service to citizens and positions that primarily support direct-service employees. For example, an officer assigned to a beat or to robbery investigations provides direct service. An officer processing invoices originated due to enforcement of

an alarm ordinance would be a support person. Typically, higher ranking sworn personnel, from lieutenants on up in rank, are classified as support personnel because their jobs as managers require that most of their time be spent in contact with other sworn personnel, rather than in contact with citizens requiring service. Normally, civilian positions in a police agency fill support roles but there are exceptions to the norm. For example, when a police agency has civilian call-takers, school-crossing guards and civilian traffic control officers, they are usually non-sworn personnel who provide a direct service to citizens.

The purpose of this type of analysis is to determine what percentage of staffing is allocated to direct service as compared with support. This is a rough measure of efficiency in the deployment of human resources. Table 3 shows how personnel staffing in the Reading Police Department is divided between direct service and support service.

TABLE 3: POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING: DIRECT SERVICE & SUPPORT POSITIONS

Rank/Title	Number	# Direct	% Direct	# Support	% Support
Chief	1	0	0%	1	100%
Deputy Chief	1	0	0%	1	100%
Inspector	2	0	0%	2	100%
Captain	3	0	0%	3	100%
Lieutenant	7	0	0%	7	100%
Sergeant	32	23	72%	9	28%
Investigator	29	28	97%	1	3%
Field Training Officer	11	11	100%	0	0%
Officer	122	105	86%	17	14%
Total Sworn	208	167	81%	41	19%
Civilians	26	15	58%	11	42%
Total All	234	182	78%	52	22%

Our analysis indicates that 19% of the sworn force of the department is engaged in activities that are primarily support in nature. This is a relatively low level of sworn personnel in support positions and the overall deployment, considering both sworn and civilian staff, has 78% of the department engaged in direct service jobs. This ratio represents a deployment pattern typical in the industry, where our experience among many jurisdictions has shown that 25% to 30% of personnel in police agencies provide support services. While the ratio of support positions is typical of the industry, there are several jobs currently assigned to sworn personnel that could be accomplished by non-sworn personnel. This report will present opportunities to augment direct services by redirecting sworn personnel from those activities that can reasonably be handled by non-sworn staff.

The Reading Police Department has 16 organizational units, including the Chief's Office. The Chief has a Secretary, Special Duty Sergeant,

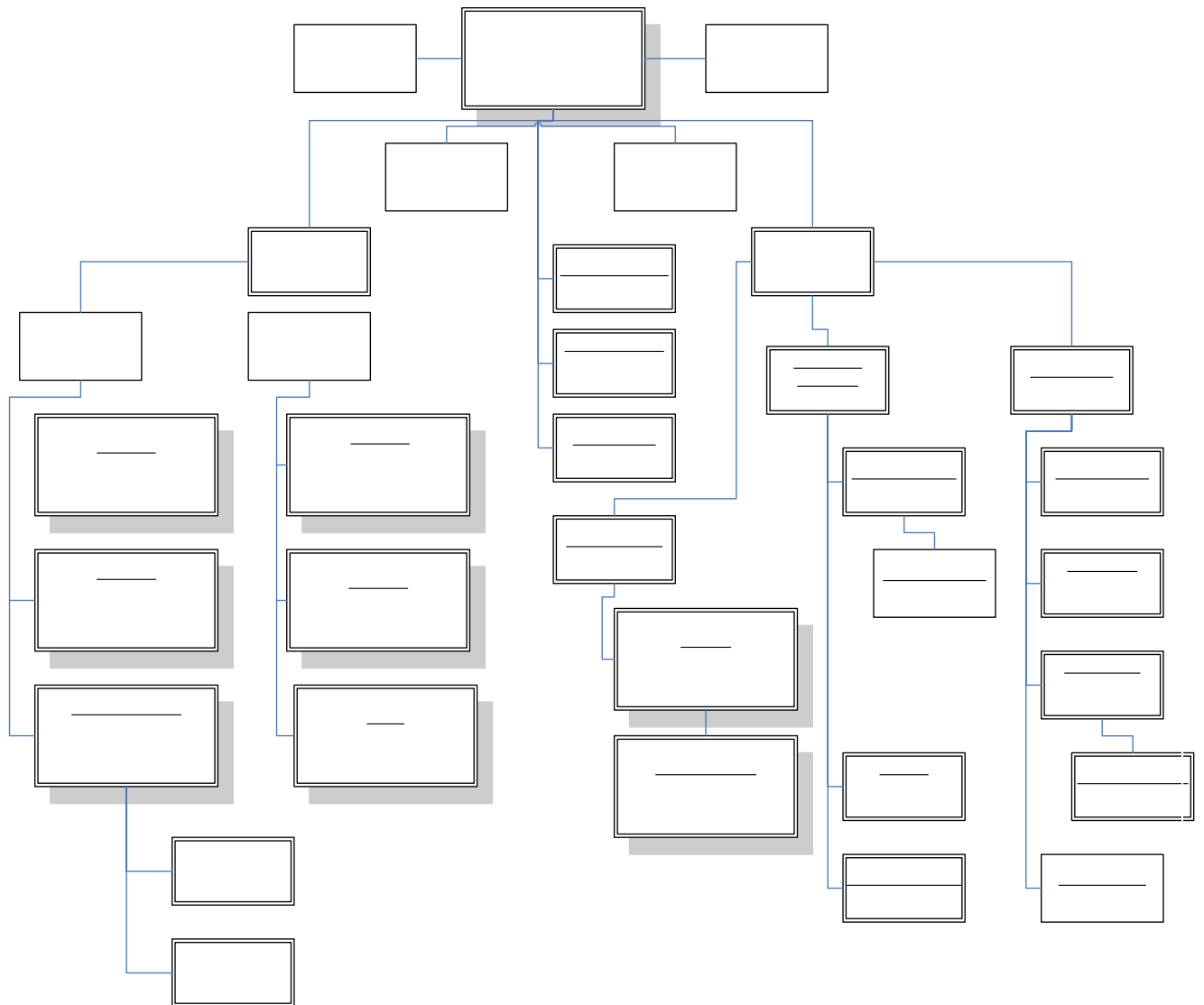
Professional Standards Sergeant, an Administrative Sergeant, and the Deputy Chief reporting directly to him, in addition to the two Inspectors. Also reporting directly to the Chief are several sworn personnel who have been assigned to special task forces that are not bid positions.

The Patrol Division consists of all patrol operations, the Mobile Operations Command (which includes Neighborhood Policing Officers, officers assigned to the housing authority and bike patrol officers) and the Traffic Unit. Patrol operations are provided by a four-platoon arrangement intended to facilitate matching of staffing to demand.

The Special Services Division includes Records, Communications, provides fleet management and quartermaster services, Crime Prevention (which includes School Resource Officers, Training, Planning and Research), Criminal Investigations, Vice Investigations, the Identification Section (which includes Property and Evidence) and a Warrant Officer who provides Court Liaison Services. The Services provided by this Division are a mixture of direct and indirect services.

The organization chart for the Reading Police Department as it existed at the time of this study is shown as Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: READING POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



Patrol
1 Captain

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Problem-Oriented Policing Model

One of the primary objectives of this operations analysis is to maximize the department's resources for crime prevention. The policing model that has proven to be most successful in preventing crime is the problem-oriented policing model, also known as CompStat. This policing model rests on the following basic principles:

1. Setting specific objectives
2. Gathering and analyzing crime data on a timely and accurate basis
3. Developing effective strategies and tactics based on data analysis
4. Deploying resources rapidly in response to crime patterns
5. Implementing strong accountability protocols

The Reading Police Department operates according to a traditional policing model that is primarily based on a rigid organizational system structured to respond to calls for service and investigate/solve crimes that have occurred.

The new Police Chief has chosen to lead the department into the problem-oriented policing model. Management Partners supports that decision as having the highest likelihood of impacting crime in Reading to a significant degree, if implemented correctly.

Recommendation 1: Implement the problem-oriented policing model in the Reading Police Department.

Gathering and analyzing crime data on a timely and accurate basis is key to implementing the problem-oriented policing model. Effective use of intelligence will result in strategies and tactics that reduce crime over time. The Reading Police Department has excellent software in place for gathering and reporting crime data. However, there are no human resources dedicated to crime analysis. Every successful problem-oriented-policing model has personnel dedicated to crime analysis. The Reading Police Department will also require this capacity to be successful.

Recommendation 2: Establish a Crime Analysis and Research Unit staffed by a Crime Analyst position and a Research Analyst position.

Recommendation 3: Establish procedures that fully utilize the existing software for crime mapping and analysis.

In addition to having timely and accurate crime data, the success of problem-oriented policing will depend on rapid deployment of resources in response to crime patterns. The current organization pattern and state of labor relations in the Reading Police Department are contrary to this principle. The Department has a multitude of “specialized units” with rigid scope of responsibility, work rules and staffing protocols. Rules concerning where and when an officer works and the work the officer does or does not do are not conducive to the desired policing model and will tend to obstruct effective implementation.

A new organizational model is needed – one that is compatible with problem-oriented-policing strategic and tactical requirements. The organizational form that optimizes the desired policing model is to eliminate virtually all specialized units and reassign those resources to patrol. This will give police department command staff the ability to deploy those resources tactically to support the specific crime prevention/crime fighting tactics that are suggested by the enhanced crime analysis capability.

Recommendation 4: Incorporate sworn personnel assigned to Mobile Operations Command, Violent Crimes Task Force, Auto Theft Task Force, Traffic, Crime Prevention, Neighborhood Policing, DARE, School Resource Officers and Reading Housing Authority into the Patrol Division.

Operation COBRA is a tactical response to the growing problem of drug trafficking. This operation is a prime example of the application of problem-oriented policing. Operation COBRA redeploys a number of officers from patrol operations on a temporary basis to make street-level drug buys and arrests. Targeting street-level drug activity has proven to be successful in reducing crimes related to drugs.

Recommendation 5: Continue using Operation COBRA as appropriate to deter street level drug crimes.

Reading, like many other urban areas, is experiencing growing gang activity. Countywide gang collaboratives have proven in many cases to be effective tactical responses to gang activity. A gang collaborative involves the courts, schools, detention programs, parole, prosecutors, and diversion programs working together to identify gang members and develop tactics to rein in their activity.

As one element of the problem-oriented policing approach, the Reading Police Department should take the lead to develop a gang collaborative in Berks County. The San Jose Police Department has developed an excellent gang collaborative that might serve as a model for Reading and Berks County.

Recommendation 6: Research the use of gang collaboratives in police operations and develop a plan for implementing the appropriate model in Reading and Berks County.

Patrol Force Multipliers

Sworn Staff Position Analysis

In addition to eliminating permanent specialized units and incorporating those personnel resources into patrol, other opportunities exist to increase the personnel available for patrol duty. These include having civilians carry out some duties currently done by sworn personnel, and reviewing differential response protocols.

Currently there are six officers used for processing arrestees. These officers are in the Patrol division but are fully consumed by processing arrestees and are not available for direct crime prevention/crime fighting duties. The Berks County Sheriff operates an arrestee processing unit that serves all the other police departments in Berks County. The Sheriff's unit is a state-of-the-art unit that provides high-quality service. The Sheriff has offered to extend this service to the Reading Police Department at no cost. If the Reading Police Department were to utilize the Sheriff's processing unit, the six officers currently assigned to this duty could be released to patrol duties at no additional cost.

Recommendation 7: Utilize the Berks County Sheriff's Central Processing unit for arrestee processing and reassign six officers to patrol duties.

The department has instituted a Teleserve Unit to allow for differential response. This practice is highly recommended as a modern policing management tool, and it should be continued and perhaps expanded.

The objective of differential response is to allow low priority calls for service to be handled over the telephone or the Internet. The type of calls for service using this protocol are those where the responding officer would be able to do no more than take a report. For example, vandalism and there is no suspect at the scene. In reality, these types of calls, if responded to by a patrol officer, can take a long time to get to because they are low priority.

In most jurisdictions, a good response time is considered to be 30 minutes and the typical response time is over an hour. These long response times can cause callers to feel that they are not getting an adequate response. Departments using differential response have found that service quality is better and citizens feel they are being served better.

The biggest benefit of differential response however, is that all the time that had been used by patrol units responding to low priority calls can be freed up to be used for preventive patrol operations. Differential response has become a mandatory management tool in urban police departments facing high crime rates.

The Teleserve unit in the Reading Police Department is staffed by six sworn personnel. In most departments, this service is now provided by highly trained non-sworn personnel. By utilizing trained non-sworn personnel to staff Teleserve, the department could return two police officers to patrol duty at no additional cost.

Recommendation 8: Staff the Teleserve unit with trained civilians. This will eliminate four sworn police officer positions and return two police officers to patrol duties at no increase in cost.

In addition to staffing the Teleserve Unit with non-sworn personnel, the department should review its differential response protocols to determine if more calls should be diverted to the unit. Diverting more calls to Teleserve would free up additional time to be devoted to crime prevention/crime fighting tactics.

Recommendation 9: Review differential response protocols to determine the feasibility of expanding the types of calls that should be diverted to the Teleserve Unit rather than assigned for patrol unit response.

Berks County also provides emergency call taking and dispatch service on a fee basis to all police agencies within the county except for the Reading Police Department. The Reading Police Department currently employs 16 civilians to provide E-911 services within the corporate limits of Reading. Management Partners project staff analyzed the feasibility of purchasing this service from Berks County. The analysis revealed that Berks County does not use differential response protocols in its call-taking and dispatch center. This factor alone is an excellent reason not to purchase the service from Berks County.

As noted previously, differential response is an essential element of the Reading Police Department's operating mode. If differential response were not available, the Patrol Division workload would increase greatly, response to high-priority calls would suffer, and the ability to use patrol forces for crime prevention/crime fighting tactics would virtually disappear -- absent a significant additional investment in sworn personnel.

The analysis of the feasibility of purchasing E-911 service from Berks County also revealed that the software system used by Berks County is not compatible with the Reading Police Department's crime mapping and records management system. Either Berks County or Reading would be obliged to invest in new software to ensure compatibility.

The problem-oriented policing model is driven by timely and accurate data. That data is generated by the computer-aided dispatch system, the records management system and crime mapping system. Reading could not implement the problem-oriented policing model without software compatibility with the E-911 center.

Recommendation 10: Do not contract E-911 service from Berks County until the County is able to provide a service that includes appropriate differential response capacity and software compatibility.

Despite the obstacles to a consolidated E-911 operation noted above, there is such a significant savings potential that we believe the matter is worth pursuing. The Berks County Administrator has indicated a willingness to explore the feasibility of upgrading the current Berks County E-911 Center operational protocols to meet the Reading Police Department standards for differential response and data requirements.

Recommendation 11: Create a task force with Berks County and other police agencies in the county to determine the feasibility and economic advantage of implementing a consolidated E-911 Center.

At the time of the field work for this project, the department was not able to extract the numbers or timing of calls that had been diverted to the Teleserve Unit. Besides being unable to determine the workload of the unit, merging calls diverted with calls receiving a patrol unit response masks the true demand for calls for service. Common practice in departments using differential response is to track calls diverted separately from patrol unit response calls.

Recommendation 12: Track the number of calls handled by the Teleserve Unit separately from other assignments, and track the amount of time spent taking reports by hour of the day and day of the week so that staffing needs can be identified.

The Department currently assigns one sergeant per shift to inside duties as the desk sergeant. In addition to desk duties, this sergeant has a nominal duty of assisting dispatchers in prioritizing calls for service. A review of the desk duties of this position indicates that there are no police powers or training required for execution unless a person turns him/herself in for arrest and processing, which is an infrequent occurrence.

Good management would dictate that prioritizing dispatches should be a training item and included in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, thereby eliminating the desk sergeant's need to perform this duty. In other words, the need for staffing desk operations with a highly trained sworn sergeant can be eliminated and staffed by trained non-sworn personnel.

Recommendation 13: Staff the front desk with non-sworn personnel and eliminate three sergeant positions currently assigned to those duties.

Technology Issues

The police department has installed computers in each vehicle assigned to patrol or other field operations, including field supervision. The computers nominally have wireless capability. However, field units report that the systems do not work as needed. Frequent down time has prevented the computers from being the force multipliers they have the potential to be.

While the technology should provide time savings, that hasn't happened as expected. The report is that the wireless vendor does not have a support infrastructure robust enough for the police department needs.

Recommendation 14: Determine the cause of failure of computer technology installed in field operations vehicles and develop a corrective action plan.

It is possible that the corrective action plan may take a significant length of time to fix, depending on the problem and solution. If such is the case, the Police Department should investigate interim solutions. One such solution is to provide a jump drive for field vehicles. A jump drive would allow an officer to download field reports from the vehicle's computer into the records management/crime mapping system without manual effort. This is the type of interim solution that should be studied.

Recommendation 15: Determine if there are appropriate interim quick fixes to the vehicle computer problem and determine the feasibility of implementation.

False Alarm Response and Staffing

In an effort to reduce the number of false alarms to which the patrol force responds, Reading has adopted an ordinance that levies fines for false alarms. Administration of the false alarm ordinance is very labor intensive and in 2005 produced approximately \$15,000 in revenue.

The part-time civilian clerk previously responsible for administering the ordinance was terminated and administration duties transferred to sworn officers in the Crime Prevention Unit. The sworn officers estimate they spend approximately 20 hours per week administering the ordinance and are still two months behind in billing and collection activities. The approximate fully loaded cost of a sworn officer is in excess of \$30,000, or twice as much as is being collected in false alarm fees.

The budget for the part-time clerk handling these duties reportedly was \$10,000. The administration of the false alarm ordinance should either be the responsibility of a part-time clerical person, as previously established, or the false alarm ordinance should be eliminated. This action would free-up more than 1,000 hours of sworn officer time for deployment in crime prevention/crime fighting activities.

Recommendation 16: Re-establish the part-time clerk position previously responsible for administering the false alarm ordinance.

In 2005, there were 3,267 alarm calls, of which 3,197 – or 98% -- were false. Dispatch protocol calls for two officers to respond to virtually all alarm calls. Citizens requesting information about alarms is the only time one unit is dispatched, but this type call is rare.

When the patrol units arrive, they assess the situation and determine if the alarm is false or real. Once this determination is made, one unit will return to service while the other unit waits for the property owner to respond and secure the alarm and property. If it took officers only 10 minutes to respond and determine that the alarms were false, officers would have spent 1,089 hours responding to alarms during the year. The actual number is probably higher, but data was not readily available to determine an exact figure.

Alarm calls are a priority one response. It is important to understand that in the case of many false alarms, officers are abandoning other important and/or effective police work to respond. The Police Department has tried to reduce this burden through education of the public, but the pattern persists.

The City of Reading does have a charge for false alarms after the third false call, but it is a nominal \$35. Some jurisdictions have implemented a more progressive fine system in which each succeeding false alarm

corresponds to a higher fine and ultimately, after a reaching a specified level, no response from the police department.

Besides the waste of resources that results from this problem, there is another equally concerning issue: the safety of officers. The high incidence of false alarms conditions officers to believe that every alarm is likely to be a false alarm. Despite training, when responding to an alarm, officers can be lulled into a sense of security that runs counter to good practice. In the 2% of the cases where the alarm is not false, such a sense of security could lead to an unfortunate outcome for officers and/or citizens.

As currently written, the false alarm ordinance is not as effective or efficient as it could be. If the false alarm ordinance is retained, it should be restructured to reflect the realities of the market place.

Reading's experience is similar to every other police agency that Management Partners has studied. More than 98% of the alarms responded to are false alarms. Alarm companies are really selling the response of the police department to an alarm rather than the alarm itself. Few people, if any, would purchase an alarm service absent a response when the alarm is triggered.

Under the current ordinance structure, the alarm company that is making money from the police department's response to their alarm bears no responsibility for false alarms. The onus for enforcing false alarms fines falls on the City. A more efficient and fairer structure would be to bill alarm companies for false alarms, rather than billing the person or business that is the site of the alarm. And, payment of false alarm fines by the alarm company should be a condition of both responding to the alarms and to the company retaining its license to provide the service.

This arrangement requires the alarm companies to be responsible for its customers. It also eases the administrative burden of false alarm enforcement, in that it would not be necessary to send out thousands of bills and enforcement payment from thousands of citizens. Billing would be sent to the 30 to 40 alarm companies providing the service.

Recommendation 17: Restructure the false alarm ordinance to place the administrative burden of enforcement on the alarm companies. Due to the high number of false alarms in the City of Reading, the ordinance should be retained, but administered differently and restructured.

Volunteers, traffic and vehicle issues

A growing trend in law enforcement agencies is to formalize the use of trained volunteers for certain activities that support sworn personnel. Innovative programs for using citizens on patrol (COPs) have been developed by other jurisdictions and have played a significant role in crime prevention. Trained volunteers also are used as force multipliers for designated activities at special events, reducing the impact of overtime on sworn personnel.

The Reading REACT organization is already in place and could serve as the launching pad for expanding the use of volunteers to multiply the resources available for crime prevention. The Polk County, Florida, Sheriff's Office is an outstanding model to investigate for applicability to Reading.

Recommendation 18: Investigate industry initiatives for using trained volunteers for increased roles in crime prevention and crime fighting. Develop a plan for adapting these initiatives to Reading.

State law requires that a police officer must approve all requests for removal of abandoned vehicles from public or private property. In 2005, the unit received 1,480 complaints of abandoned vehicles. The unit issued 1,438 courtesy notices to inform the owner that the vehicle is considered to be abandoned and will be towed if the owner does not move it.

Each vehicle must be checked a second time before a certified letter is sent out to the owner of record indicating that a citation will be issued and the vehicle will be towed. A third check is required before the vehicle is actually towed.

In 2005, 217 abandoned vehicles were towed and approximately 200 citations issued to owners who could be identified. An additional 778 vehicles were towed from vehicular accident scenes during the year. However, a state law that applies only to Philadelphia allows police in that city to use an expedited process. In Philadelphia, the certified letter is sent upon the first vehicle check rather than the second check. Then, five days after sending the certified letter, if the vehicle is still there it may be towed. This process is about 15 days shorter than Reading's cycle time for towing abandoned vehicles. If that law were available for use in Reading, the workload associated with abandoned vehicles would be greatly diminished.

Recommendation 19: Work with the state to allow Reading to use the more expedited abandoned vehicle process permitted in Philadelphia.

The Traffic Unit inspects trash trucks annually for compliance with motor vehicle safety standards promulgated by local, state and federal agencies. The inspection is a condition of annual licensing of trash haulers. Officers inspected 56 trucks last year. This is a joint effort with the codes department. If inspection of trash trucks continues to be a priority, sworn personnel should not be used in this effort since police powers are not required.

Recommendation 20: Consolidate responsibility for trash truck inspection in the Codes Department.

Staff Reorganization

Staffing in the Chief's Office

The analysis identified a number of opportunities for realizing economies and efficiencies by reorganizing the duties of various positions. This section of the report spells out those opportunities.

Currently there are two command levels immediately below the Chief. Those command levels are inspector and captain. There are two inspectors and three captains. One inspector has two direct reports (both captains) and the other inspector has three direct reports (one captain and two lieutenants).

According to most standards of span of control, the position of inspector is not being utilized efficiently. The three captain positions have either three or four direct reports. As with inspectors, captains are not being utilized efficiently in terms of span of control. Command staff efficiency would be improved by eliminating one layer of command, either inspector or captain.

Captains are members of the bargaining unit and Inspectors are not. The commanders immediately below the Chief should not be members of the union. It is important to avoid any circumstance where a member of the command staff is put in a position where they must choose between the good of the department and the good of members of their own collective bargaining unit. Additionally, the Chief should not be the only person in the department who is not a union member.

The soundest plan for eliminating a layer of command is to eliminate the rank of inspector and then to have the rank of captain removed from the collective bargaining unit.

Recommendation 21: Eliminate the rank of inspector and negotiate the removal of captains from the collective bargaining unit.

Currently there are three sergeants assigned to the Chief's Office: a Professional Standards Sergeant, an Administrative Assistant Sergeant and a Special Duty Sergeant. The Chief also has a Confidential Secretary position that functions as the business manager of the department.

The department operations review indicated that the duties of the Professional Standards Sergeant and the Administrative Assistant Sergeant do not require a full-time officer. It is clear that the Chief does need an administrative assistant because the secretary position is fully consumed serving as the business manager.

A more economical organization plan for meeting the needs of the Chief's office would be to eliminate a sergeant position and replace it with a non-sworn administrative assistant. The duties of the Professional Standards Sergeant and the Administrative Assistant Sergeant could be consolidated. The Professional Standards Sergeant investigates formal complaints against police officers. The number of complaints investigated, about 50 per year, does not demand a full-time officer. The Administrative Assistant Sergeant duties primarily involve scheduling for the Chief and providing administrative support as needed by the Chief.

Recommendation 22: Consolidate the duties of the Professional Standards Sergeant and the Administrative Assistant Sergeant in the Chief's Office. Eliminate one sergeant position and replace the position with a non-sworn administrative assistant.

The Special Duty Sergeant in the Chief's Office performs routine duties that do not require a highly trained ranking officer to complete them. This is an ineffective use of a sworn position that should be used for direct service to the citizens of Reading. This sergeant is working on warrant control, tracking and cancellation of warrants, special events and details planning, and Weed and Seed program duties. These duties do not demand a full-time person and they can be performed by non-sworn personnel.

The study also revealed that a sworn investigator is acting as the court liaison, overseeing attendance at court by sworn personnel. This is a vital function and must be performed. However, it does not appear to have an eight-hour a day workload. An economical plan would be to transfer the duties of the Special Duty Sergeant to the Court Liaison position, turn it into a civilian job and reassign it to the Patrol chain-of-command, since most of the personnel reporting for court are in the Patrol Division.

Recommendation 23: Transfer the duties of the Special Duty Sergeant to the Court Liaison position, civilianize the Court Liaison position and reassign it to the patrol division chain of command.

Other Potential Conversions of Sworn to Non-Sworn Staff

The Records Unit has both a civilian supervisor and a sergeant assigned to the organization. The analysis of the operation revealed there is no need for both levels of supervision. It is a redundancy that produces no value added.

Recommendation 24: Eliminate the Records Sergeant position.

A sergeant is assigned to grants management and accreditation. These are duties that do not require police powers and should be performed by non-sworn personnel. Earlier in the report, we recommended creation of a Crime Analysis and Research unit to be staffed by two new non-sworn professional positions. The grants management and accreditation duties should be reassigned to this unit and the sergeant position can be eliminated.

Recommendation 25: Reassign the grants management and accreditation duties to the new Crime Analysis and Research unit, and eliminate the sergeant position currently performing these functions.

The Identification, Property and Evidence section is staffed by a sergeant and three officers. The duties of this organizational unit do not require police powers for appropriate performance.

Recommendation 26: Replace the four sworn personnel in the Identification, Property and Evidence unit with non-sworn personnel.

The School Crossing Guard program is managed by a sworn police officer. The job duties do not require police powers for appropriate performance and could be performed by a non-sworn position.

Recommendation 27: Replace the sworn officer managing the School Crossing Guard program with a non-sworn position.

Converting Traffic Unit Positions; Attracting retirees

The Traffic Unit is in charge of the contract towing company, which tows and stores all vehicles ordered towed by any officer in the department for any reason. One of the unit's officers is responsible for sending out a certified letter to the owner if the vehicle is not picked up from the towing company lot within three days. In 2005, 908 certified letters were sent to owners.

One officer in this unit monitors all accident reports and follows up on all hit-and-run incidents. The officer evaluates each incident for solvability after contacting the victim and responding officer. There were 1,074 incidents reviewed last year.

These duties do not require police powers to perform and should be assigned to a non-sworn position.

Sworn officers in the Traffic Unit also do bicycle registration. While 95 bicycles were registered in 2003, fewer than 20 were registered in 2005. There is a \$1.00 fee for this. Bicycle registration is apparently an activity required from some event or series of events in the past that concerned the community. Bicycle registration should be evaluated for its continuing value. If it is continued, these duties should be assigned to non-sworn personnel.

Fleet management, and uniforms and equipment duties are assigned to the Support Section Lieutenant. These also are duties that do not require police powers to perform and should be assigned to a non-sworn position.

Recommendation 28: Assign all clerical duties attendant to abandoned/towed vehicles, hit-and-run accident follow-up, bicycle registration, fleet management, uniforms and equipment to a newly created clerical position responsible for logistics.

If the false alarm ordinance is retained and restructured as recommended earlier, this logistics position also could administer the restructured false alarm ordinance referenced in Recommendations 16 and 17.

Many police departments that have aggressively transferred job duties not requiring police powers from sworn to non-sworn personnel also have actively recruited retired police officers to fill those positions. This is an excellent practice that should be adopted by the City of Reading. It is very logical that retired police personnel, who are very familiar with operations, would be able to function at a higher level more quickly than those coming from outside the Department.

Recommendation 29: Establish procedures and policies to attract retired police personnel to non-sworn positions within the police department.

Overtime Analysis

In 2005, according to records furnished by the Police Department, personnel worked overtime on 29,269 occasions for a total of 102,454 hours at a cost of \$2,225,244. The average overtime event required approximately 3.5 hours of paid time. At an average cost of \$21.72 per hour, the average overtime event cost was approximately \$76. There were a total of 233 positions budgeted, meaning that overtime averaged

approximately 440 hours per position, or more than 10 weeks of overtime each.

Table 4 below breaks down the overtime by purpose.

TABLE 4: 2005 POLICE OVERTIME BY PURPOSE

Category	# of Events	# of Hours	\$ Amount
Regular Assignment	9,383	23,238.50	\$389,121
Special Assignment	4,747	20,636.75	\$405,932
Replace/Sick	1,220	9,090.25	\$195,548
Replace/Vacation	567	4,093.00	\$95,851
Holiday Work	577	4,224.50	\$104,139
School Training	175	495.75	\$4,462
Other Overtime	1,593	8,258.00	\$135,903
Sub-Total	18,262	70,036.75	\$1,330,956
Private Duty	749	2,844.50	\$48,539
<i>Common Pleas Court</i>			
Grand Jury	636	70.00	\$24,687
Suppression Hearing	30	127.25	\$2,301
Pre-Trial	495	1,781.75	\$47,166
Criminal	1374	5,496.50	\$146,783
Juvenile	587	2,090.25	\$49,523
Civil	9	59.75	\$1,600
Sentencing Hearing	16	62.50	\$1,131
Other Court Time	12	3.00	\$494
Stand-by	634	4.50	\$22,155
Sub-Total CP Court	3,793	9,695.50	\$295,840
<i>Minor Judiciary</i>			
Preliminary Hearing MJ	4,170	12,941.50	\$354,253
Traffic Court	2,274	6,855.00	\$193,827
Civilian Court MJ	7	32.25	\$809
Civilian Prosecution	8	28.50	\$537
Other MJ Time	3	10.50	\$218
Sub-total MJ Court	6,462	19,867.75	\$549,644
Other Overtime	3	10.00	\$265
Total All Overtime	29,269	102,454.50	\$2,225,244

Special Assignment Overtime

The single largest category of overtime in terms of cost is for special assignments at \$405,932. This category represents the occasions when the department is mounting a tactical operation outside of its normal course of operations. Examples would include task forces organized for specific operations such as COBRA. Special assignment overtime is approved by the Chief or one of the inspectors.

Special assignments average slightly more than 112 hours per sworn officer. The 4.35 hours per event average is almost 25% higher than the average per event for all overtime. The average hourly cost of \$19.67 is 9% lower than the average hourly cost of all department overtime, indicating that special assignments are being fulfilled by lower paid, and likely younger, officers in the department. Since special assignment overtime is always for planned operations, the opportunity to control this factor is present.

It should be noted that the City may receive reimbursement for some special assignment overtime from other government agencies. For example, when the U.S. Department of Transportation organizes holiday traffic stops to promote safe driving practices it reimburses participating jurisdictions for the overtime cost of such programs.

Regular Assignment Overtime

Regular assignment overtime is the second highest dollar cost category of overtime (\$389,121), the highest in terms of number of hours (23,238) and the highest (9,383) in terms of the number of events. Regular assignment overtime occurs when an officer works longer than his/her normal tour of daily duty. For example, if an arrest is made near the end of the shift schedule, and processing the arrest and completing paperwork extends beyond the scheduled end of shift, regular overtime is earned.

Regular assignment overtime is primarily earned by sworn personnel providing direct service -- about 166 of the 207 sworn personnel. The average number of overtime events per direct service sworn officer is more than 56. This works out to regular assignment overtime occurring for each direct service officer more than once a week. As would be expected, the average number of hours per overtime event for regular assignment overtime, at 2.48 hours, is about 30% lower than the average for all department overtime.

Regular assignment overtime is the hardest overtime to control for every police agency. Supervisors are loathe to closely control this category of overtime for fear of dampening the aggressiveness of officers or sending a message that cost is more important than good police work.

Nonetheless, this category does benefit from specific critical analysis. A good practice would be for command staff and supervisors to receive a regular monthly report of which officers worked regular assignment overtime, focusing specifically on the number of overtime events. It would also be a good practice to develop a more specific coding system for this type of overtime so that supervisors would be able to tell if the overtime is due to traffic stops, processing arrests, completing field reports and so on.

Recommendation 30: Develop a monthly overtime report specifically for regular assignment overtime, tracking each officer's experience for this category by specific cause for the overtime. Distribute the report to supervisors and command staff.

Ongoing analysis of a report of this type gives supervisors an opportunity to examine the tactics being used by patrol officers aggregating a high amount of overtime. This may be helpful in differentiating officers using good police work from those who use tactics to generate overtime for themselves.

District Court Preliminary Hearing Overtime

The third most expensive category of overtime, \$354,253, is for preliminary hearings in district courts. Typically, when a person makes an appearance for a misdemeanor charge a preliminary hearing is held in district court to determine probable cause. In such cases, the arresting officer must appear in case information is needed by the magisterial judge to make a determination. In that sense, this overtime category is not subject to much control by department managers. The department reports that it already has a protocol that limits to one the number of officers appearing on a specific case. This is a standard practice in most police agencies.

Traffic Court Overtime

Traffic Court overtime cost was \$193,827 in 2005. The cause of the overtime is similar to preliminary hearing overtime except the subject matter is traffic offenses.

Replacement /Sick Overtime

There were 1,220 instances when it was necessary to replace a person absent due to illness with a person on overtime. Total cost of such overtime was \$195,548 for 9,090 hours of overtime. Typically, only sworn officers engaged in direct service are replaced with personnel on overtime to meet minimum staffing requirements.

There were 167 direct service sworn personnel in 2005. Each person is scheduled to work approximately 250 shifts a year (five shifts a week multiplied by 50 weeks). This totals 41,750 shifts scheduled to be worked by sworn personnel in direct service assignments. In 2005, approximately 3% of the scheduled shifts for these personnel had to be covered by a person on overtime status. This relatively low level of replacement for sick leave usage is commendable.

It is not clear from the overtime report or the labor agreement if an officer may use sick leave and still earn overtime in a pay period in which they

are in regular pay status for less than the full number of hours in the pay period. Other police departments have experienced situations where officers have conspired to abuse sick leave overtime. In those departments, officers paired up by each using sick leave on different days of the week and then replacing the officer on sick leave on overtime status. The officers engaged in this conspiracy benefited by only actually working 40 hours but getting paid for an extra eight hours at time and a half.

It is good practice not to allow any employee to be eligible to earn an overtime premium pay status in a pay period until they are in regular pay status for the full number of hours in the pay period. In other words, an employee should actually have to work 40 hours in a week before being eligible to earn a time and a half premium. There is nothing in the data that was available to us that could be used to prove or disprove the potential for such an abuse either exists or is occurring.

Patrol Staffing

Management Partners hoped to address a central question concerning police operations in Reading as part of its analysis. That question is, 'What is the appropriate staffing level for patrol operations?'

Patrol staffing is a function of demand for service, officer availability and patrol planning standards. To determine the appropriate staffing level, data that shows how much time patrol officers spend responding to calls for service must be available and reliable. While Reading has data that could yield such information, it was not in a form that could be used for purposes of determining staffing requirements. We also must be able to calculate the average amount of time an officer is actually available for patrol. Once these numbers are known, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) standards for patrol planning can be applied. Lacking the needed information in a usable form, this analysis could not be done.

Recommendation 31: Track time spent on calls for service by patrol units so that the information can be easily extracted to determine patrol staffing requirements.

The IACP standard for the ratio of sergeants to officers is a range of six to 10 officers per sergeant. At the time of the field work for this study, Reading had 92 officers assigned to patrol and 13 sergeants, a ratio of seven officers to one sergeant. If Reading applied the mid-point of the IACP range, eight officers per sergeant, the number of sergeants needed would be reduced to 12.

Recommendation 32: Use a ratio of eight officers per sergeant to determine the appropriate number of sergeants for patrol staffing.

Financial Policies

The operations review revealed a number of financial policies that should be reconsidered by the Mayor and City Council.

The City bears half the cost of school crossing guards and the entire cost of school resource officers assigned permanently to the schools. While it is certainly appropriate to cooperate with all government jurisdictions to address issues of public safety, it is also important that the cost of services be allocated to the appropriate unit of government so they are transparent to the public. School crossing guards and school resource officers are essentially providing safety and security service to the school district, its students and employees. Given the City of Reading's financial condition and its concerns about crime, it would be appropriate to revisit the cost-sharing arrangement with the school district for school crossing guards and school resource officers.

Recommendation 33: Examine the current cost-sharing policy with the school district for the school crossing guard and school resource officer programs.

Field Training Officer (FTO) is a permanent rank in the department. This practice leads to two consequences that are not present in most police agencies. In Reading, because FTO is a permanent rank, when an FTO transfers out of the Patrol Division the rank moves with the person, even though they may never provide field training again. Currently, there are three FTOs outside of the Patrol Division – one each in the Auto Task Force, Crime Prevention and Identification units. Seven FTOs are in Patrol. It is possible that each of the seven FTOs in Patrol could transfer out. Even so, each would still enjoy the rank of FTO, even though they may never again perform such duties.

The second practice regarding FTOs that is different than industry practice is that in Reading they are paid at that permanent rank even when they are not training a new hire. In most jurisdictions, FTOs are paid a premium only when actually training a new hire.

Recommendation 34: Adopt the industry practice of assigning Field Training Officers to the Patrol Division only and pay the FTO premium only when assigned to actually training a new hire.

The City has recently adopted the practice of leasing police vehicles. The scope of this study precluded a detailed analysis of the economics of the practice for Reading. However, experience has shown that normally the

most economical practice is to purchase vehicles rather than lease. And, the most economical practice is also to replace vehicles based on life cycle costs.

Recommendation 35: Develop a life cycle cost analysis for police vehicles and prepare an economic analysis of lease versus purchase based on the life cycle analysis.

IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report summarizes the operational and financial impact of implementing the recommendations made as a result of the operations analysis.

Table 5 below summarizes the impact of the proposed recommendations on staffing and cost.

TABLE 5: IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON STAFFING AND COST

Position Title	No. Current	No. Proposed	Difference	Cost Increase/ (Decrease)
Chief	1	1	0	0
Deputy Chief	1	0	-1	(\$130,000)
Inspector	2	0	-2	(\$215,860)
Captain	3	3	0	0
Lieutenant	7	6	-1	(\$87,930)
Sergeant	32	24	-8	(\$673,440)
Investigator	29	28	-1	(\$81,930)
Field Trainer	11	0	-11	(\$884,230)
Police Officer	122	123	+1	\$77,930
Total Sworn	208	185	-23	(\$1,995,460)
Chief's Secretary	1	1	0	0
Communicators	16	16	0	0
Front Desk/Teleserv	0	12	+12	\$604,620
Records	7	7	0	0
Training	1	1	0	0
Traffic	1	2	+1	\$50,385
Court Liaison	0	1	+1	\$50,385
Property/Evidence	0	5	+5	\$251,925
Crime Analysis/Research	0	2	+2	\$124,770
Logistics	0	1	+1	\$50,385
Total Civilians	26	48	+22	\$1,132,470
Total All	234	233	-1	\$862,990

In summary, the recommendations in this report would reduce the number of sworn personnel in the department by 23 positions and add 22 civilian positions at an estimated cost savings of approximately \$863,000.

Operationally, the distribution between direct service and support service would be as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6: DIRECT AND SUPPORT STAFFING DISTRIBUTION CHANGES

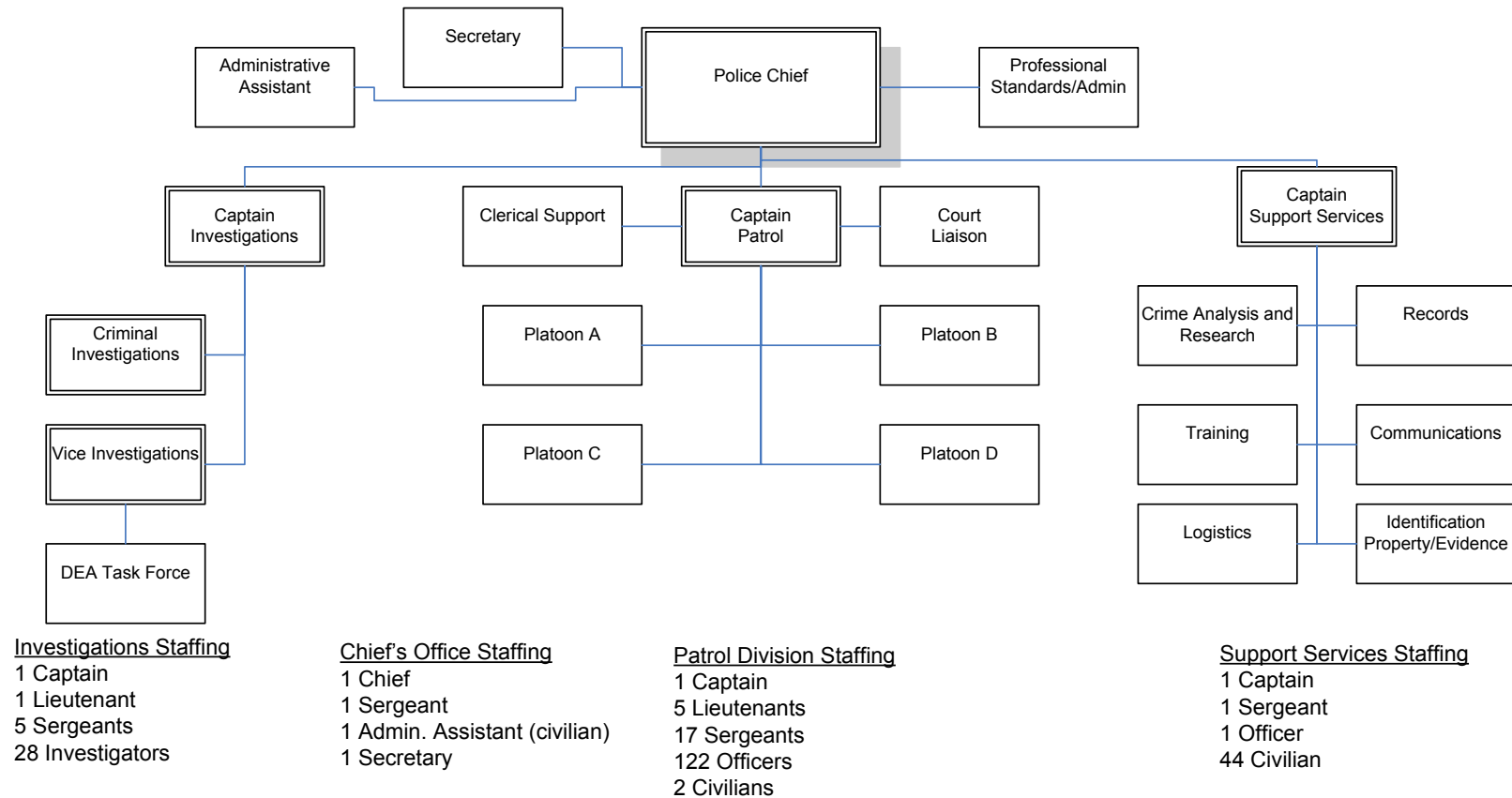
Position Title	Number	Number Direct	Percent Direct	Number Support	Percent Support
Chief	1	0	0%	1	100%
Captain	3	0	0%	3	100%
Lieutenant	6	0	0%	6	100%
Sergeant	24	23	96%	1	4%
Investigator	28	28	100%	0	0%
Officer	123	123	100%	0	0%
Total Sworn	185	174	94%	11	6%
Civilians	48	22	46%	26	54%
Total All	233	196	84%	37	16%

Currently, of the 208 sworn positions, 167 (81%) are providing direct service. Implementing the recommendations in the report would place 174 of the 185 (94%) sworn personnel in direct service positions. This represents an increase of 11 sworn personnel available for crime prevention/crime fighting duties at no increase in cost. Adding 11 new officer positions to the personnel complement would cost approximately \$850,000 in personnel cost alone, not including the cost of equipment and vehicles. In addition, the number of positions providing support service is reduced from 51 positions to 37.

Even though there would be no change in the number of overall positions, the savings resulting from moving sworn personnel from duties that do not require police powers back to the street, and replacing them with civilians where necessary, is estimated to be over \$863,000. That level of savings would fund approximately 10 additional police officers, including uniforms and equipment.

Figure 2 is the proposed organization chart that coincides with the recommendations in the report.

FIGURE 2: PROPOSED READING POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



CONCLUSION

The Reading Police Department has an opportunity to implement a number of improvements that should improve its ability to prevent and fight crime. This will require implementing the problem-oriented policing model and discarding much of the organizational plan currently in place. Doing so will require determined leadership from the department command staff, and strong support of the Mayor, Managing Director and City Council. The most difficult aspect of implementation is likely to be on the labor front, as much of what is required to position the department for better service within the financial constraints of the City will require enlightened leadership from police union officials and a willingness to adopt modern policing practices within the rank and file.